

and the improvements would be bought and sold, just as they are now; but no one would be injured by it. No one would be paying another for land values. It would, therefore, be much easier for all to get land to use.

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## BI-MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

By THE EDITOR

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We are going to depart a little from our usual summary of the news of the bi-month by setting forth some reflections a few recent occurrences have suggested to us. We know we shall startle some of our friends, but this is the conclusion to which we have come: We need a revival of the teachings of Henry George.

This reflection is called forth by a meeting at Carnegie Hall, on Tuesday, March 13. The principal speaker was Herbert Bigelow, of Cincinnati. The occasion was afforded by the Humanitarian Cult, of this city, and Mr. Misha Appelbaum was chairman. The two minute speeches made by Messrs Brown, Ingersoll and Eyre were too short to permit them to say anything, so we will pass them up as negligible. But the speech of Mr. Bigelow affords us the text for the present sermon, if our readers will indulgently permit us to sermonize.

Mr. Bigelow began with an appealing picture—and he is a master word-painter—of a woman in Cincinnati who works ten hours a day at a cash desk for a salary of eight dollars a week to keep herself and her boy alive. The orator touched his hearers to the quick. Then he approached the remedy. He devoted most of his time to the illustration of the incidence of taxation on a set of harness shifted in its several mutations and paying a tax over and over again.

Were Mr. Bigelow's hearers able to trace the connection between these taxes on a set of harness and that Cincinnati woman, the victim of a system which disinherits man from the earth? We think not.

The trouble is that the modern advocates of the Single Tax begin where Henry George left off. Henry George never began his speeches with such discussion—he left that as incidental to the main argument. The gist of his speeches were man's right to the use of the earth, the abolition of poverty by the opening up of natural opportunities, the blessings that would flow from the "sovereign remedy" of taking land values in taxation.

Every speech on the Single Tax should begin with what it is intended to do, the method of doing it, and what it will accomplish. Incidental to this is the accompanying tax reform, which the abolition of all taxes will bring about, but these are consequences only, and very minor consequences, too. The emphasis laid upon them is a meaningless emphasis to the vast majority

of the people. Nine-tenths of our population have no more real acquaintance with the actual tax-gatherer than they have with the Caliph of Bagdad.

The incidence of taxation may be cited as good reasons for getting rid of taxes, but these reasons for the Single Tax do not appeal strongly to anybody. Single Taxers talk to workingmen as if the presentation of a tax bill was a weekly incident in their lives. No wonder they refuse to get excited about it. Most of them would like to have something to pay taxes on.

For this strangely restricted line of argument into which of late our advocates have fallen, no one in particular is to blame. Our speakers have fallen into a rut, that is all. The movement lacks much of the old enthusiasm—that God-given intoxication of men who see a vision. We need to be lifted up. We need to realize more keenly the urgency of our message. We must stop talking the language of tax students, and talk the language of social reformers whose reform is the biggest ever announced in this world.

There are audiences, of course, to which the part of our message that concerns itself with the question of taxation may chiefly appeal. But these are few in number, and though influential are not those to be chiefly considered. But here at this Carnegie Hall meeting was an audience where such addresses were entirely out of place.

Our congratulations to Mr. Misha Appelbaum. After each speech he deprecated the name Single Tax, after stating that he was not a Single Taxer, but he repeated—and the reiteration was intentional, we think—"Not a Single Tax, but the giving back to the people the land which is theirs." We accept the rebuke, for it was deserved.

On another page will be found the notice of the forthcoming Conference at Atlantic City on April 13, 14 and 15. The object of this gathering is to welcome "Luke North," but it is chiefly to blazon to the world the fact that 260,000 votes were cast in the great State of California for the Single Tax undiluted. It will do some needed work that is to be done, and will probably discuss the Constitution printed in this issue as a substitute for the unworkable one adopted at the provisional meeting of the National League. This Conference is, of course, not a meeting of the League and cannot do anything official, but its recommendations will no doubt have great weight with the next conference of the League as well as with the Provisional Advisory Committee, many of whom have signed the call for the Atlantic City Conference. It will be far more representative than the proposed conference at Kansas City.

Of recent happenings, the most important is the election of Joseph Pastoriza as mayor of Houston, on February 23, which is announced by the *Houston Press* as "a clean cut victory for the people." The Press says:

"The real victors in this race are the people. They were the force behind Pastoriza. They deserve the credit for electing him.

"It has been the history of Pastoriza's political career that his strength grows with each succeeding battle and with the natural growth of the city and the electorate. The harder his foes fight him, the more votes he gets. Here are the votes he polled in the last three campaigns:

For commissioner, 1913.....	4913
For commissioner, 1915.....	5659
For mayor, 1917.....	6180

"This last figure gives Pastoriza credit for his second and third choice votes. But that is fair and logical under the preferential ballot."

As our readers know, there is still a division in California, the Great Adventure group presenting the following measure for the general elections of November, 1918:

"The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

"Article XIII of the Constitution is hereby amended by the following section:

"On and after January 1, 1920, all public revenues, State, county, municipal and district, shall be raised by taxation of the value of land irrespective of improvements thereon, and no other tax shall be levied.

"The intent of this amendment is to prevent the holding of land out of use for speculation and to apply the land values which the community creates to community purposes.

"All laws in conflict herewith are hereby repealed."

The Equity Tax League presents the following:

"The People of the State of California do enact as follows:

"Article XIII of the Constitution is hereby amended by adding the following as Section 5 thereof:

"Section 5. On and after January 1, 1919, all personal property, except the franchises of public service corporations, shall be exempted from taxation thereafter to be levied.

On and after January 1, 1920, all improvements on land shall be exempt from taxation thereafter to be levied, but the value of land and the value of such franchises shall not be so exempt.

"Provided that Sections XI and XIV of Article XIII of the Constitution shall not be affected hereby in so far as they concern State revenues.

"All provisions of Article XIII of the Constitution in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

"This amendment shall be self-executing."

Before the campaign begins in earnest there exists the hope that there may be a further joining of forces on a single measure. The present supporters of the Equity measure have abandoned the local option fight, agreeing that all Single Taxers should unite on a State-wide measure of Single Tax. Some of the most prominent supporters of the former Great Adventure campaign are now with the Equity League.